

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5094

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, February 2, 1995

Title: An act relating to emergency management.

Brief Description: Transferring emergency management functions from the department of community, trade, and economic development to the military department.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Winsley, Rinehart, Drew, Rasmussen, Pelz and Oke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 1/25/95, 2/2/95 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5094 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Drew, Hale, Heavey, McCaslin and Winsley.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: Since World War II, the state's functions relating to emergency management (disaster planning and response) have been organizationally separate from the Military Department. The original structure was the former Civil Defense Department. In 1986, a successor agency, the Department of Emergency Management was merged into the Department of Community Development as the Division of Emergency Management.

In 24 states, both the emergency management and the military functions are performed under the umbrella of the Military Department itself. It has been reported that this combination has increased timely response, efficiency and coordination. This was demonstrated in the severe flood conditions in the Midwest last year.

Similar legislation was vetoed by the Governor in 1994.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Military Department, instead of the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED), administers the state's comprehensive emergency management program.

The term "director" is defined to mean "adjutant general" for purposes of administering emergency management functions.

Provision is made for the standard transfers of powers and duties, personnel and equipment, rules and pending business, and other generic functions from DCTED to the Military Department.

The current policy of the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development relating to reimbursement of out-of-jurisdiction fire fighters called into service under a mobilization plan is codified.

By December 31, 1995, the Military Department, in cooperation with the Washington State Patrol and the Emergency Management Council, must develop a statewide plan to enhance coordination and efficiency.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The Military Department must conduct an emergency management efficiency study.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect July 1, 1995.

Testimony For: The transfer will increase efficiency and lower costs by elimination of duplicative facilities and equipment.

Testimony Against: Emergency management should stay (along with fire protection services) in DCTED.

Testified: Van Youngquist, Cowlitz County; Keith Eggen (pro); Gary Lowe, WSAC (pro); Andrew Lofton, CTED (con); Rick Jensen, Washington State Patrol Troopers Association (pro); Tim Erwin, OK's Cascade Company (pro).